1: McGee E-5 (1894-1895)1898 NU31 Seri NU31

The painted designs vary among different individuals, but are fairly persistent for each. The prevailing design at Costa Rica in 1893 was that of the aged matron known as Juana María (plate XVIII), with variations in detail such as that exhibited by her unmarried daughter Candelaria (the Seri belle shown in plate XXIV); next in frequency were the designs, in white and red, exhibited by the matrons portrayed in plates XX and XXII. Other designs observed are indicated in plate XXVI. The variations in individual designs are apparently due either to varying care in the application of the paint or to the degree of obliteration by wear—e. g., the withered Juana María sometimes put on her design askew and was negligent of details, while the blooming Candelaria greatly elaborated the details of the pattern and carefully perfected the symmetry of the whole when preparing for her full dress sitting before the camera (plate XXIV), so that her design was then gorgeous by contrast with the nearly obliterated blur of a half-hour before. The designs are renewed every few days, especially for ceremonious occasions, and hence are practically permanent. 302

When grouped in relation to their wearers, the designs are found to exhibit family connection. Thus, Juana María's design is repeated, with greater elaboration of detail and with a pair of supplementary marks, in that of her daughter Candelaria; the winged symbol of the Seri matron portrayed in plate XX is repeated with minor variations in that of her daughter, the Seri maiden pictured in plate XXV; while the symbols of the mother and infant daughter depicted in plate XV are essentially alike. It is noticeable, too, that in the nearly spontaneous arrangement of individuals in the group shown in plate XIII there is a tendency toward subgrouping by symbols; and it was constantly observed that the family groups gathered about particular jacales (such as that shown in plate XIV) displayed corresponding designs, though there were frequent visitors from neighboring jacales bearing other designs. Briefly, all the observed facts, as well as the supplementary information gained by inquiry, indicate that the designs are hereditary in the female line, but are susceptible of slight modification both in elaborateness of detail and in the addition of minor supplementary features. 302 424 593

The principal apparatus and materials used in the face-painting are illustrated in plate XXVII. The chief pigments are ocher, gypsum, and the rare mineral dumortierite; the ocher yields various shades of red, ranging from pink to brown; the gypsum affords the white used in most of the designs; while the dumortierite is the source of the slightly varying tints of blue. So far as was observed, the pigments are not blended by mixing, though there is some blending due to overlapping in application. The ocher is commonly extracted and transported as lumps of ocherous clay or ocherous gypsum (plate XXVII, figures 1 and 5), though it is sometimes reduced to powder and transported in bits of skin or rag, or in cylinders of cane (plate XXVII, figures 3 and 4); and it is 386 [317] [915]

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prepared by trituration with a pebble or rubbing with the fingers, usually in a shell cup. Sometimes the shell used for the purpose is the valve of a *Cardium*, which serves indiscriminately as cup, spoon, skin-scraper, etc; but preference is apparently given to thick and strong shells, such as the wave-worn valve of *Chama* (?), shown in plate XXVII, figure 7, which are consecrated to the use and eventually buried with the user, together with a supply of the paint (like that illustrated in the cane cylinder—figure 4—which was a mortuary sacrifice). The gypsum is usually carried in natural slabs or other fragments, perhaps rounded by wear (plate XXVII, figures 6 and 8); it is prepared by wetting and rubbing two pieces together, the larger being reduced to metate shape by the operation. The dumortierite was observed only in the form of a pencil made by pulverizing the substance and mixing with sufficient clay to give consistency. The several pigments are applied wet by means of human-hair brushes kept for the purpose, the process occupying from half an hour to three or four hours for the more elaborate designs. So far as observed at Costa Rica in 1894, the paints were mixed in water only; but since painting outfits found on Tiburon island in 1895 were smeared with grease, it is probable that either water or fats may serve for menstrua, at the convenience of the artists. Commonly the process of painting is measurably cooperative. The matron usually depicts her device on the faces of her daughters up to the age of 12 or 15 years, when they learn to make the applications themselves; and frequently two or more women (usually those with similar devices) work together in preparing and applying the pigments, each laying the paint on her own face and apparently guiding her hand partly by the sense of feeling and partly by suggestions from her coworkers; but Candelaria and some other of the younger women at Costa Rica frequently worked alone, aided by a mirror in the form of a shallow bowl of water set in the shadow while the brilliant desert glare fell full on the face.

The mines yielding the pigments were not located. The geologic conditions are such that the ochers are undoubtedly abundant; but it is probable that the gypsum is uncommon and confined to a remote locality or two, and that the dumortierite is rare and scanty here as elsewhere. The care with which the paints are preserved, prepared, and applied, the fact that they are indispensable feminine appurtenances even on the longest journeys, and their sacred rôle in the mortuary customs, all combine to indicate that they are among the most highly prized possessions of the people and by far the most precious of their minerals.

The sematic functions of the designs are esoteric, yet an inkling of their meaning was obtained through Mashém, the interpreter at Costa Rica in 1894; from his expressions it appears that the designs are sacred insignia of totemic character, serving to denote the clans of which the tribe is composed. But three clans were identified, and

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[For the use of various plants and minerals in the preparation of ?antezj kóil or blue clay used in Seri facial ornamentation, see category 386.]